

DRAFT

Village of Ardentown
Ardentown, DE 19810

Established 1922
Incorporated 1975

The regular meeting of the Village of Ardentown was convened at 7:30 pm on Monday, February 8, 2021
Alison Wakelin, Town Chair, presiding. A quorum was present.

In Attendance

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Cindy Cohen | 18. Pat Lane | 34. Mary Ann |
| 2. Alison Wakelin | 19. Maureen Gordon | Patterson |
| 3. Chelsea Buscaglia | 20. Jeana Carey | 35. Christiana |
| 4. Mike Buscaglia | 21. Joe Grippe | Dobryzinski |
| 5. Cheryl Regan | 22. Annie Gutsche | 36. Ardenoid |
| 6. Joe Painter | 23. Oliver Gutsche | 37. Beverly Hawkins |
| 7. Terry Harvey | 24. Uttam Shanbhag | 38. Barbara |
| 8. Jill Emery | 25. Sophia | Mondzelewski |
| 9. Dan Emery | Hogan-Shanbhag | 39. Melissa Parsonson |
| 10. Harry Themal | 26. Elaine Schmerling | 40. Holly Custer |
| 11. Betty Ann Themal | 27. Suzanne Cherrin | 41. Michael Pione |
| 12. Judith Kay | 28. Mhairi Craig | 42. Marian Pione |
| 13. Line Farr | 29. Stuart Craig | 43. Chris Monson |
| 14. Drew Hansen | 30. Edmond Bischoff | 44. Sharon Kleban |
| 15. Terri Hansen | 31. Janna Scheffen | 45. Ray Siegfried |
| 16. Shari Phalan | 32. Shelley Robyn | |
| 17. Joan Fitzgerald | 33. Susan Kaye | |

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes for the November 2020 meeting are approved as written

TREASURER'S REPORT: Holly Custer reporting:

Operating Accounts:	\$ 28,402.14
Municipal Street Aid:	\$ 17,581.32
<u>Arden Building and Loan:</u>	<u>\$ 19,965.18</u>
Total Funds Available:	\$ 65,948.64

TRUSTEES REPORT: Harry Themal reporting- You have probably heard that Lisa Riblett was overwhelmingly elected as our new Ardentown Trustee, succeeding Pat Lane.

Lisa got 71 "yes" votes out of 80 votes cast. There were 3 "no" votes and 6 ballots had to be voided and there was one abstention.

Those 80 votes represent more than half of the names listed on our leases as eligible, a wonderful example of the leaseholders' interest in the Ardentown Trust.

Joan and I want to thank Pat Lane for almost exactly 10 years of serving as a valuable Trustee

Lisa Wilson Riblett reporting- Thank you to everyone for all of the confirming votes. I was actually taken aback by the strong support. As we move forward, if you have any concerns about trees please give me a call or send me an email.

Pat Lane reporting- It has been an honor and a pleasure to serve as Trustee these past years. The interaction with everyone has been very pleasant, thank you.

Joan Fitzgerald reporting- We want to thank Alison Wakelin and the Registration Committee for collecting and counting the ballots.

The Trustee budget has been posted on the website, if anyone needs a copy, please let one of the Trustees know.

Land rent bills were mailed today and we are pleased to report there has been no increase.

Harry Themal responding to the Assessment Committee's Annual Report- The Trustees replied to the Assessment Committee with questions for discussion.

To summarize the Trustees' reply: Ardentown's Deed of Trust requires the Trustees to "collect the full rental value of the land "(and) "pay all state and local taxes...out of the rents received." This clearly states that the Trustees are only authorized to collect the rental value of the land. The Trustees would be in breach of the Trust if they were to implement the Assessment Committee's proposal. In addition, all leaseholders would have to agree to relinquish their 99-year leases, which are based on "the full rental value of the land 'excluding improvement'." Delaware's Superior Court has ruled that the single-tax Georgist principles, that all three of the Ardens honor, are proper and legal. Therefore the Assessment Committee's proposal is unanimously not acceptable to the Trustees as we would be in violation of the Deed of Trust that we have promised to protect and uphold.

REGISTRATION COMMITTEE: Cindy Cohen reporting,

Recent Resident Changes: a. Eric Paul Levy and Talie Ayers moved into 2316 Orchard Road (the Peace House) in October, and just received their Welcome packet. b. Daniel and Jill Emery have recently moved into their house at 2305 Orchard Road. They received an ACRA phone directory, and we are in the process of getting their Welcome packet to them. 2. Welcome Packets: We have recently added two new pamphlets to the Welcome packets: ● The Ardens' Community Wildlife Habitat Project and ● the Georgist Guild's "A Brief History of the Ardens and Henry George." 3. Trustee Nomination: At the request of the Trustees, members of the Registration Committee assisted in the counting of ballots for the nomination of Lisa Riblett to fill Pat Lane's Trustee position. Thanks to Betty Ann Themal and Maureen Gordon for helping with the counting. 4. Newcomers: Are there any new residents in attendance at tonight's meeting? If so, please let us know by unmuting yourself and saying hello. As always, if you know of any other leasehold changes, or changes in rentals within Ardentown, please contact one of the Registration Committee members. It takes the whole village to keep track of all the comings and goings of our residents. Submitted by Cindy Cohen, Registration Committee Chair. [Registration Committee Members include: Cindy Cohen, Chair; Betty Ann Themal, and Maureen Gordon; with ex-officio members Terri Hansen, as Town Secretary; and Joan Fitzgerald, as Town Trustee.]

MEMORIAL GARDEN: Betty Ann Themal reporting, nothing to report

BUDGET COMMITTEE: Andrew Hansen reporting The 2021 proposed budget was sent with the minutes and the mailer. Past proposed and actuals from 2020 were provided for context.

Normal income expected for 2021. Not expected to change from regular sources. Expenses against discretionary budget, all remain stable.

Discretionary budget items of note include:

- Administrative: Some increases are related to Zoom, and other Covid costs. \$1,000 proposed for potential costs related to scanning old town minutes to the website
- Composting: Site no longer active. Budget is for potential clean-up costs
- Municipal street aid: 2020 saw an unexpected income increase, not expected to repeat
- Paths and Natural Areas: Kept flat. Monies come from multiple income sources so there was not an overage in 2020.

Good conversation at Budget Meeting around updating processes so that creating the Budget starts earlier. Budget Committee plans to meet mid-year to check in with the Budget, consider how things are done and managed. Thanks to all the Committee members for engaging in this conversation

- Storm Water Management- \$10,000 Alison- we do have problems with storm water run off. Arden has invested \$25,000 (matched with a grant for a total of \$50k) in a plan. Alison, Terry, and Elaine have met to discuss problem areas. They believe that some of what we are dealing with can be addressed with rain gardens. The cost to install rain gardens averages around \$5,000, so the thought is to invest in a couple of rain gardens to start to address some of the problem spots. Contact Alison, Elaine, or Terry if you want to be involved.

- Paths- Judith Kay would like to see the Station Path cleaned up between Swiss and Loreley Lane, which needs it
- Assessment- \$300 for costs associated with possible large group meetings. Not captured in proposed budget sent with mailer but shown in meeting

Non discretionary items-

- Waste Management: income from Trust to town, then sent to Waste Management. May be an increase in September, but we don't know what that will be
- Paths and Trees- donations are a budget projection

Moved to accept the 2021 budget as written with addition of \$300 for Assessment committee. Vote to accept passed unanimously.

ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE: Joe Grippe reporting for Janet Cosgrove- Janet Cosgrove regrets that she was unable to attend tonight's meeting due to computer issues. She has provided the following report. The assessment committee had our quarterly meeting on 2/7/2021, Alison Wakelin attended. We welcome Janna Scheflen replacing Page Dwyer. We want to recognize that we received the Trustees' response to the committee's proposal. We acknowledge that the Trustees have full authority to determine what Full Rental Value is as stated in the Deed of Trust, and look forward to comparing how Ardentown sister towns interpret Full Rental Value. Both Arden and Ardencroft assess Full Rental value differently than Ardentown.

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE: Report submitted by Allan Kleban, read by Melissa Parsonson: The Museum continues to welcome a smaller, but steady stream of visitors to see our two current exhibits: "15 Years, 15 Treasures" and "Equality in the Ardens." The latter exhibit, currently on display in the Bernie Schwab Community Room, will be moved to the main gallery to free up the Community Room for other activities.

Barbara Macklem and Beverley Hawkins researched and provided the Arden Club president Pat Toman with early Arden Club History for use on their new design website. This included a letter signed by Frank Stephens and Will Prive giving over the leasehold with the Large Barn (now the Gild Hall) in return for stock in the Incorporated Club dated 1909.

In the next few months, we will be working with a student of Professor Thomas Guiler to enhance our oral history collection. This will include transcribing some of our older interviews and potentially working on a finding aid; conducting new interviews using the Zoom platform and machine transcription; and creating content- probably a podcast series- to share Arden history through the recollections in the oral histories.

A reminder that regular Museum hours are Wednesday, 7:30-9p.m. Sunday, 1-3 p.m. We may manage visitor numbers and observe state COVID-19 protocols, please consider emailing us at ardencraftshopmuseum@gmail.com if you plan to visit.

PLANNING COMMITTEE: Nothing to report. Alison Wakelin is considering appointing herself to the Planning Committee to get it going again. If anyone feels like this is a conflict, please reach out and contact her.

PUBLIC WORKS: Cheryl Regan reporting:

Roads: There was some road work done on Orchard Road and a group of potholes attended to on East Mall. A more extensive check will be done in the Spring.

There has been an interest in changing the current road de-icer to another that is less caustic to the environment and more pet friendly. There are pro and cons to changing, price being one of them. We ask that all questions be forwarded to Paul Romagano who will discuss with anyone interested. This is not intended to be a discussion at this meeting.

Elaine Schmerling reporting:

Pathways: Huge thanks to: Chris Monson for clearing 2 large trees that fell across the main Ardentown forest path along Naaman's Creek; and Rich Cropper for building 2 new beautiful bridges and laying straw along the wet path from the bottom of Sconset across to Brae.

Stormwater: Several of us are reviewing the stormwater issues w/Allison & Terry Harvey and exploring grant possibilities (Arden got a 50% match for Stormwater Management Plan, usually needed for the grants, which requires a \$25K cash match).

Restoration: We had a few ivy pulling volunteer days in Ardentown woods – in special wildflower area below Phibbs, and below Painters’/Harvey’s. Elaine will continue going out sporadically w/helper.

SLF: It is the time for searching for lanternfly egg masses! Elaine initially thought that there were many fewer. But a few different times searching hard, found a lot around the Candlelight/streamside/behind compost bins; on maples in Petit Green and Loreley (probably more up high we can’t get to). Found at least 50 behind Maura’s – especially on a huge London Plane tree behind the house – Edmond helped cut ivy off and we found many egg masses under the bark that came off when we pulled the ivy off (photo) and many many on the Bee bee tree above the trap! Found at least 30 in our first look across tracks at the top Sunnyside area near the tree of heaven rail trees.

Action to do: cut the big bee bee tree, and few saplings left this winter. Anyone else especially Sconset residents, should search for egg masses. See the flyer on bulletin board or I can mail you.

White Mulberry: Will helped ID the tree next to walnut at the top of Sconset that caught so many SLF’s – an invasive white mulberry (from Asia). THAT is what has seeded in all over (next to redbud that had covered the sign at top of E. Mall – and at least 2 other trees at the triangle near Sconset – marked w/pink tag). Also to be removed.

Community Wildlife Habitat certification: Ardens are getting closer to this certification – thanks to Jill on the Arden Forest Committee. See new flyer on bulletin board and Forests of the Ardens FB. Will be in new welcome packets.

BUZZ WARE VILLAGE CENTER: Shari Phalan reporting,

TOWN CHAIR:

Alison Wakelin reporting: DEMA is meeting with us this week to fill out forms for their ‘Continuity of Operations’ program. This ensures that each municipality has a plan for essential functions to continue in the case of a major emergency.

Arden and Ardentown Town Chairs met with the Chief of NCC Police, Colonel Bond, as a result of the county increasing the Ardens’ contributions to the police according to the Local Services Function. We discovered that 70% of what we pay is to cover basic patrol services, which includes police response to our calls, and 30% goes to other services, all of which seemed reasonable. We briefly discussed the recent robberies on Sconset Road, and the Chief reminded us that we have a liaison with the County Police, Master Corporal Kristen Hester.

We have committed to scanning Town records into a safe online location. Terri Hansen and Cindy Cohen have volunteered to help with this work. Pat Lane has already been scanning Trust records for several years.

OLD BUSINESS: Special Town Meeting Minutes- Alison Wakelin reporting; We have edited the minutes from the Special Town Meeting in 2018 to only include the motion and the vote. The Town voted to accept the edited minutes. Nobody expressed a desire to post the accompanying discussion.

NEW BUSINESS: no new business

ELECTIONS:

Archives- Allan Kleban and Christiana Dobryzinski, elected unanimously

Memorial Garden- Cheryl Regan, Barbara Mondzelewski, Edmond Bischoff, elected unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm

Respectfully Submitted By

Terri Hansen, Secretary of Ardentown